

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Children at risk on the water

Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) marine officers who intercepted an unlicensed jet ski rider on the Gold Coast were shocked to find the vessel was also carrying a four-year-old who was not wearing a lifejacket.

Maritime Safety Queensland acting general manager Andrew Mahon said the MSQ Australia Day compliance operation found parents not bothering to put lifejackets on their children.

"It is almost incomprehensible people could be so careless with the safety of children when boating," Mr Mahon said.

"Small children are the most at risk when accidents happen on the water, even as simple as being tipped out of a vessel.

"I can't over-emphasize how important it is to follow the lifejacket safety rules every time you go out on the water, particularly when it comes to children."

Mr Mahon said not wearing, carrying, or having easy access to operational lifejackets was one of the top fatal five risks for recreational boating.

These included drug and alcohol use, failing to keep a proper lookout, poor trip planning and boat maintenance.

"Lifejackets are like seatbelts. If you're not wearing a lifejacket it can't save you," he said.

During December and January, MSQ carried out a South East Queensland safety blitz on lifejacket compliance.

MSQ's Maritime Enforcement Team intercepted 662 vessels on the Sunshine and Gold Coasts, with one in five breaching lifejacket rules.

They intercepted a total 959 vessels from Noosa to the NSW border and inland on the Leslie, Moogerah, Maroon and Somerset Dams.

Nearly half (47 per cent) of vessels were found to be non-compliant with safety regulations in some way.

Of 259 people who drowned in boating incidents in Queensland between 1992 and 2020, only 15 were known to have been wearing lifejackets.

Queensland's lifejacket rules can be found on the [MSQ website](#)



Jet ski riders intercepted by MSQ on the Gold Coast on Australia Day

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